

Attitude of Special Educators towards Electronic Learning

Abstract

This study is related to attitude of special educators towards Electronic learning. Descriptive Survey Method was used by the Researcher. The purposive random sampling technique was used in the Research study. 10 Special schools of Special education were selected randomly from that district of Jodhpur and Jaipur (Rajasthan). The present study was delimited to only two districts of Rajasthan i.e. district Jodhpur and Jaipur special educators. The samples of the study comprised of 100 special educators (50 Males and 50 Females of Special education) were selected. The major finding of the Research study revealed that 70% Special educators have favorable attitude towards electronic learning and 30% Special educators have unfavorable attitude towards electronic learning.

Keywords: Attitude, Special Educators, Electronic Learning.

Introduction

Teacher competency towards technology is become essential. According to Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, "Thinking is progress. Non-thinking is stagnation of the individual, organization and the country. Thinking leads to action. Knowledge without action is useless and irrelevant. Knowledge with action, converts adversity into prosperity." India would like to produce of best students who ultimately create knowledge and contribute in their economy. There is need for change in the Indian education system where use of science and technology becomes essential to move with the contemporary global education system. India has the capacity to become the hub of electronic technology enabled teaching and learning and presently NCERT has digitalized the text books. Now teachers has to incorporate the development of Information Communication Technology in the classroom and try to make it successful. This approach of teaching is named as innovative approach or innovative use of Technology and also it may name as technology based learning. Child is providing an environment for electronic learning in schools and facilities are provided in this concern. Every school has a mandate to equip with a computer laboratory with a technical assistance. Every teacher is supposed to keep a knowledge of ICT. Now the teaching learning process is different from traditional teaching. By 2015-16, nearly 2.5 million students were participating in online learning at institutions of higher education in the India. Many higher education institutions are offering on line courses. These courses are said to be MOOC (Massive Open On line Courses). The online education is rapidly increasing in the country.

Electronic Learning (E-Learning)

Electronic learning or e-learning is based on multimedia instructional designed principles. Computer plays an important role in this area. There are various educational mobile applications developed like NCERT has its own application that can be downloaded on mobile phone. The most important thing is availability of internet access. This is called advanced learning and in this way children can keep them self-updated with the new upcoming of the institutions. The word E-learning was introduced in year 2000 when literatures were start available in CD/DVD and later on available on internet.

Initially the concept of e-learning was not very much clear to the teachers and the use of power point presentations become more accessible. Lessons were prepared through power point presentations and teachers were writing the text in ppts. Later on the system of delivering the e content is changed and the significance of power point presentation is understand by everyone.

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Concept of Electronic Learning (e-Learning)

Electronic learning (or E-Learning or eLearning) is a process or approach of learning which enhances the teaching learning process and makes students' understanding level high.

1. "E-learning is the use of internet and digital technologies to create an experience that educates our fellow human beings" (Horton, 2001)
2. "E-learning is the continuous assimilation of knowledge and skills by adults stimulated by synchronous and asynchronous learning events- and sometimes Knowledge Management outputs- which are authored, delivered, engaged with, supported and administered using Internet technologies." (Don Morrison 2003).
3. "The delivery of a learning, training or education program by electronic means E-learning involves the use of a computer or electronic device (e.g. a mobile phone) in some way to provide training, educational or learning material." (Derek Stockley 2003).
4. "E-learning is commonly referred to as the intentional use of networked information and communications technology in teaching and learning." (Som Naidu 2006).
5. "In many respects, it is commonly associated with the field of advanced learning technology (ALT), which deals with both the technologies and associated methodologies in learning using networked and/or multimedia technologies". (Wiki)

Types of E-Learning**Synchronous E-Learning**

When a group of students are engaging in learning at the same time with using any of the electronic devices it is called Synchronous learning. For example Lectures and Webinars, Videoconference or Group chat

Asynchronous E-Learning

When students engage themselves in self-learning and such an environment is provided to them than it is called asynchronous learning. Asynchronous learning can be carried out even while the student is offline. For example e-Mail, Social site/blog, wiki, LMS and CMS and Model

Medium of E-Learning

1. eBooks (pdf, epub)
2. Audio and Video format (online and offline)
3. Internet, Social Media and Web based system
4. Virtual Classrooms
5. E-library

Benefits of E-Learning

1. Learner-Centric:- controlled by the learner-decide how, what and when they want to access information
2. Portability and Flexibility:- flexibility of learning from any place at any time
3. Situated learning:-integrate the ideas being discussed with the working environment, or access resources on the internet
4. Dynamic configuration:- dynamically configured to suit environment and learner needs.
5. Reusability:- Content of any media can be granularized and made as an independent

module which enables assembly and dynamic presentation of learning material in an effective and meaningful manner

6. Availability of expertise and resources:- increases availability and productivity of subject experts
7. Measurable Assessments:- objective usage reports about the effectiveness of the e-learning
8. Minimal incremental delivery cost
9. Development of ICT skills:- ICT skills and learners acquire skills to present their work
10. Informality in learning:- More exchange and assimilation of information takes place in informal settings such as chat rooms, and one to one interactions and discussions

E-learning involves delivery of content and resources per special teaching and learning via different communication protocols. E-learning mechanism involves a variety of professionals such as Special educator, Rehabilitation psychologist, Clinical psychologist, instructional designers, Reviewers, Graphic Designers and Library and information professionals etc. Simply, e-learning is the mixture of computer technology. E-learning is an interactive tool of learning experience where the facility of online interaction is available. It is a scheduled activity.

As we know, the computer teaching learning technology has progressed from classroom lectures to seminars to videodiscs and CD-ROMS to computer based training and wireless communication through various learning objects. Special learning objects include CDs, electronic books, (e-books), electronic Journals (e-journals), audiovisual aids etc. For a large group of students the e-learning is very effective and quality of teaching can be improved. The opportunities made available through e-learning are both significant and numerous special and general education. However, when it is conferred with mobility its IT power is multiplied. Mobility allows the special learners to have access to learning and information anytime and anywhere. As a result of rapid computer technological advances Personal Digital Assistant and wireless devices are also being used as e-learning special tools. The use of Personal Digital Assistant has opened a number of possibilities and opportunities to enhance the special educational experience and concept of distributed learning with the use of internet, we can deliver special materials that may not only be viewed online, but also retrieved and stored on Personal Digital Assistant for viewing at a later time. It provides an opportunity to special learners at an accelerated pace and opening up new knowledge transfer. The advantages of e-learning is that it covers the distance place learners.

The special students in the class use handheld computer or PDA's; the special educator uses a notebook computer and the lecture hall has wireless support. The special educators need not write on the blackboard. Instead they 'beam' instructions to special student's handheld computers. Handheld computing is fast gaining popularity all over the developed countries (USA) because of its affordability, portability and versatility. The biggest advantage is that the special students have access to

the digital devices throughout the day. The special students can easily transfer draft copies of papers to each other and make revisions resulting in peer editing. Digital cameras, projector and portable scanners are also being used in the developed countries for instructions due to their simplicity and affordability. All these things are possible only because of internet, web, which as we all know is a global collection of interconnected computer neurons. These play a very important role in the special teaching and learning environment of information society. The information needs and urgency in acquiring the special needed information has made libraries to change rapidly. In order to achieve this end, the libraries use new and special information and communication technologies.

Need of the Study

The paradigm shift in the field of education defines the value of special children and therefore they can be trained through e-learning teaching learning process. Teaching should be learner centered and in case of special children the one to one attention is essential. The application of Information computer technology for teaching and learning in real classroom depends very much on the ICT skills that the teacher possesses. There is no single agency or single well-conceived curriculum for Information computer technology skills or training to trainers or a definite set of ICT skills or competencies that the trainees are expected to possess. Hence, there is a need to prepare a comprehensive set of Information computer technology skills to be possessed by trainees and to find out if the trainees possess the identified set of skills. The need is more in the case of the special teacher – educators as they are teaching special students at a point of transition in their education. The attitude towards e-learning in classroom instructions is important factor among special educators in order to implement the usage of it in a productive way. The need for understanding special educator’s attitude towards electronic learning becomes essential. Hence, the present study has been undertaken to the study of attitude of special educators towards electronic learning and its use in classroom. The attitude of special teacher educator needs to change towards e learning and then only they can use the same in the classroom.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the attitude of special educators towards Electronic learning
2. To study the difference in the attitude of male and female special educators towards Electronic learning
3. To study the difference in the attitude of rural and urban special educators towards Electronic learning

Hypotheses of the Study

Table-1: Showing Percentage Distribution of Attitude of Special Educators towards Electronic Learning (N=100)

Variable	Size of Sample	Mean	%Age of Special Educators Above Mean	%Age of Special Educators Below Mean
Special educators	N=100	21.45	70 %	30%

1. Special educators have favorable attitude towards electronic learning.
2. There exists no significant difference in the attitude of male and female special educators towards Electronic learning.
3. There exists no significant difference in the attitude of rural and urban special educators towards Electronic learning.

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was followed for conducting this study. Questioner for special educator and interview schedule regarding practice related to the use of ICT for special children was used for data collection.

Sample of the Study

The present research study, the purposive random sampling technique was used. In order to collect the data for the study, out of 33 districts in Rajasthan, two districts were selected randomly. Then, 10 special school of special education were selected randomly from that district. Thereafter, 100 special educators were selected randomly from these special schools.

Toolused

A self-made questionnaire was used by the investigator to study the attitude of special educators towards e-learning. The description of the questioner for special educator is as follows: The questionnaire in total includes 20 items for which respondents were supposed to choose yes/no on the basis of their experience and observation. The items focused on the practices of attitude changing were categorized under four sub-dimensions, namely practices based on attitude barrier and changing bias (4 items), attitude strength (6 items), attitude accessibility bias (5 items), and attitude ambivalence (5 items).

1. Attitude barrier and changing: Insufficient information and prior commitment.
2. Attitude strength: strong attitudes are those that are firmly held and that highly influence behavior.
3. Attitude accessibility: The accessibility of an attitude refers to the ease with which it comes to mind.
4. Attitude ambivalence: Ambivalence of an attitude refers to the ratio of positive and negative evaluations that make up that attitude.

Interview Schedule

An unstructured interview scheduled was constructed and used with special educator to know the attitude towards e-learning.

Statistical Techniques

The following techniques were used: Mean, Standard Deviation, t- testand Percentage.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

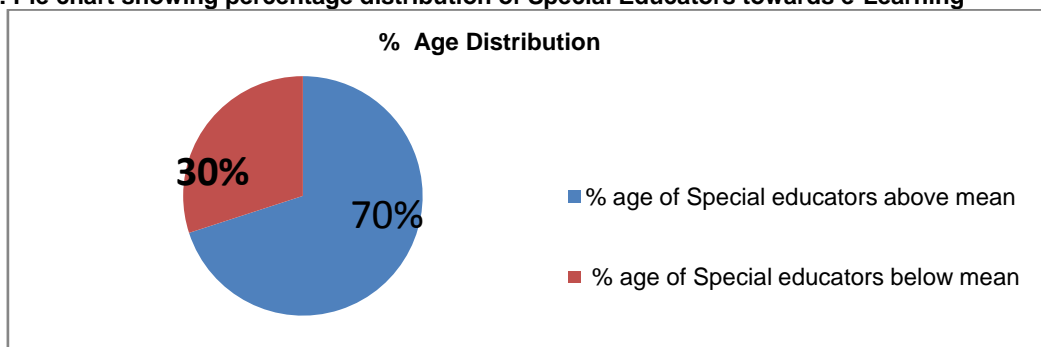
Hypothesis No.1

Special educators have favorable attitude towards electronic learning

From the table no.1, analysis of observed scores, revealed that the mean scores of special educators are 21.45 and out of 100 special educators, 70% special educators lie above mean and having favorable attitude towards Electronic learning and 30% special educators lie below mean and having

unfavorable attitude towards Electronic learning. Hence, the majority of the special educators have favorable attitude towards Electronic learning. Thus, our hypothesis "special educators have favorable attitude towards E-learning" stands accepted.

Figure 1: Pie chart showing percentage distribution of Special Educators towards e-Learning



Hypothesis No.2

There exists no significant difference in the attitude of male and female special educators towards electronic learning.

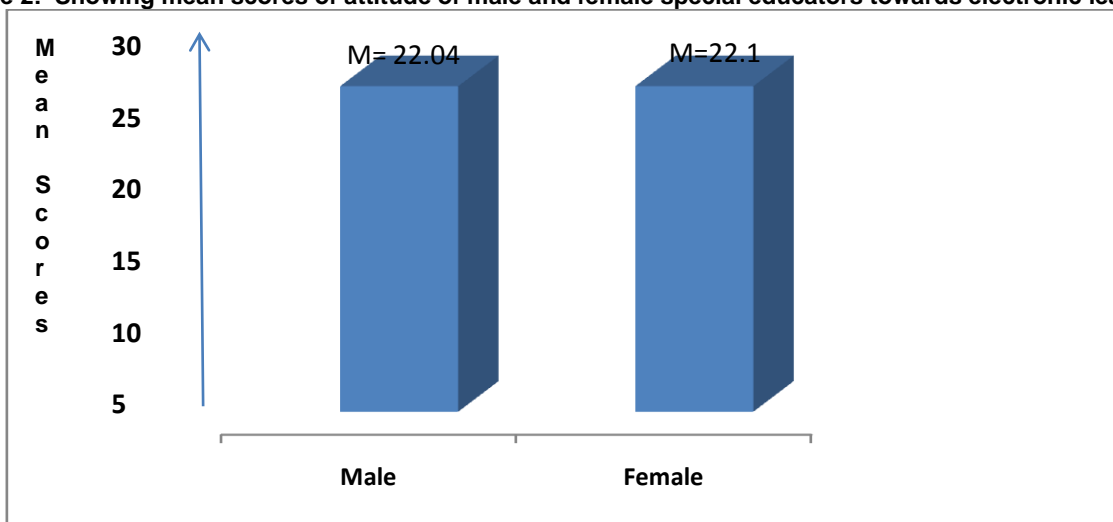
Table 2: Showing "t" Value for The Attitude of Male and Female Special Educators towards E-Learning (N=100)

Variables	Size of sample	Mean Scores	S.D	S.E _D	df	t-value	inference
Male special educator	N=50	22.04	1.787	0.337	98	0.178	Not significant at 0.05 level
Female special educator	N=50	22.01	1.61				

It is quite clear from table 2 that the mean scores of male special educators are 22.04 and SD is 1.787. The mean scores of female special educators are 22.01 and SD is 1.61. The calculated "t" value is 0.1787. From table, t-value at 0.05 levels is 1.96 and

t-value at 0.01 levels is 2.58. So, our calculated t-value is less than table value at both levels of significance i.e. at 0.05 level and 0.01 level. The null hypothesis is not rejected.

Figure 2: Showing mean scores of attitude of male and female special educators towards electronic learning.



Hypothesis No.3

There exists no significant difference in the attitude of rural and urban special educators towards e-learning.

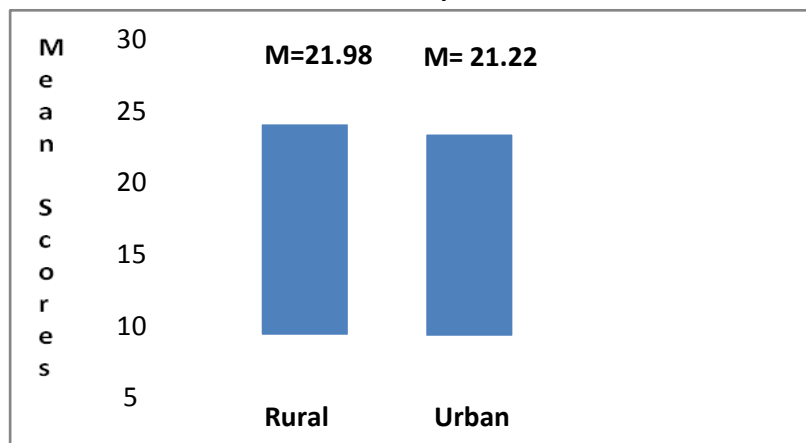
Table 3: Showing “t” value for attitude of rural and urban special educators towards electronic learning (N=100)

Variables	Size of sample	Mean Scores	S.D	S.E _D	Df	t-value	Inference
Male special educator	N=50	21.98	1.675	0.325	98	2.34	Significant difference at 0.05 level
Female special educator	N=50	21.22	1.497				

It is quite clear from table 3 that the mean scores of rural special educators are 21.98 and SD is 1.675. The mean scores of urban special educators are 21.22 and SD is 1.497. Our calculated “t” value is 2.34. From table-3 t-value is 1.96 at 0.05 levels and t-value is 2.58 at 0.01 levels. On comparison, our calculated t-value is more than table t-value at 0.05 level of significance and less than table t-value at 0.01 level of significance. This shows that significant

difference exists in the attitude of rural and urban special educators towards e-learning at 0.05 level and no significant difference exists in the attitude of rural and urban special educators towards e-learning. Therefore, the null hypothesis-There exists no significant difference in the attitude of rural and urban special educators towards e-learning”, is rejected at 0.05 levels and stands accepted at 0.01 levels.

Figure 3: Showing Mean Scores of Attitude of Rural and Urban Special Educators towards E-Learning



Main Findings

The main findings derived from the analysis of data are as given below:-

1. 70% special educators have favorable attitude towards e-learning and 30% special educators have unfavorable attitude towards e-learning.
2. There exists no significant difference in the attitude of male and female special educators towards e-learning.
3. There exists significant difference in the attitude of rural and urban special educators towards e-learning, at 0.05 levels and no significant difference exists at 0.01 levels.

Educational implications

The research study is considered worthwhile only if it has some importance for related area. This research study has implications for the special educators; the special educators may be encouraged to make use of the online resources at the special child institution for teaching learning process and for their professional development. Efforts may be made to train the special educators in the application of Information Computer Technology skills in the teaching learning process. There are two

researches conducted by Prof. Sarika Sharma and Anashkumar Das in the year 2017 on “A Concept Note on Vocational Training on Behavioural Skills in Mild Intellectually Disabled Person” and “Vocational Training on Behavioural Skills in Mild Intellectually Disabled Person: An Empirical Study” which was published in the journal named Innovation The Research Concept. These papers reflects the attitude of special teacher educators towards the development of competency in the special children.

Special Educators play an important role in the implementation of Information Computer Technology in teaching and their attitudes have proved to be significant predictions of technology use in other words, special educator attitude towards the use of Information Computer Technology for special educational purposes is one key factor for the success of the Information Computer Technology utilization.

Special education institutions is facing the challenge to equip ICT facilities in the classroom and therefore technological advancement and related innovations becomes a challenge. Electronic Learning can bridge the gap between these two ends.

Since the findings of our research study shows the attitude of special educators towards electronic learning is positive and therefore if teachers gets such facilities than they can motivated to use or facilitate their teachings. Paradigms such as "just- in- time" and "at own pace" learning, special student centered and collaborative approaches have emerged and are supported by the electronic technological advancement. However, there impact is governed by successful integration of pedagogical philosophies within the special curriculum. The introduction of technology based curriculum can be a good beginning in this area. Curriculum must have a hand book for teachers which helps them use of modern computer technologies like interactive white boards, blogs, etc.

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